

Miller's Dramatic License in *The Crucible*

While Miller freely admitted that this play was not intended to be a history, he researched the information for the witch trials from primary documents in Salem. He was careful not to misrepresent characters or their actions. Miller did make some changes for the sake of the story. One of the largest was the Abigail Williams and John Proctor affair. Miller inferred from actions noted in court documents that Abigail and John had a relationship. Miller created all conversations to support this idea. Furthermore, Abigail was actually eleven years old when the story takes place. While girls were often wed around her age, Miller made her older in his story to make his audience more comfortable with this plot line. Miller's other significant alterations are the exclusion of characters and the compression of time. For example, Parris was still married at the time and had two other children, and there were several other judges and afflicted witnesses. Likewise, in reality, Rebecca Nurse was hanged several weeks before John Proctor, and Giles Corey's "pressing" did not occur until a month or two later. These changes were most likely necessary to make the play "fit" onto the stage.